



June 7, 2021

Contents

Employee Spotlight.....	1
Mike Downey – Outstanding Job!.....	1
Employee News	2
Phasing Out \$20 Flat Rate Per Diem	2
Governor’s Honor Award Announcement.....	2
Training Opportunity	2
2021 Virtual Tree Steward Symposium "Standing Tall, Growing Together."	2
News You Can Use	3
Nursery Practices for Loblolly Pine	3
There is never shortage of lumber, there is just shortage of lumber at cheap prices	3
Public/Employee Event Calendar.....	3
Old Intranet expires August 1.	3
Last Week.....	3
State Forester	3
Forestland Conservation.....	4
Forest Resource Management	4
Agency Lands	4
State Forest.....	4
Eastern Region	5
Western Region	5
News Clips.....	5

Employee Spotlight

Mike Downey – Outstanding Job!

- ◆ Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) Certified Wildlife Biologist Marc Puckett shared the below message with VDOF in reference to a prescribed burn and wildlife project at Goodwin’s.
 - “My hat is off to Mike Downey of VDOF for leading as burn boss and getting this burn done. The timing was excellent - early April. We appreciate VDOF's lead role in prescribed fire on private lands.

Mike did an outstanding job leading and coordinating a prescribed fire on a somewhat unique site in Louisa County. We looked at it yesterday and the results were excellent.

I am glad VDOF made the decision to have their folks more involved with prescribed fire on private lands. It is an awesome service."

Employee News

Phasing Out \$20 Flat Rate Per Diem

- ◆ The \$20 flat rate per diem that was put in place during COVID-19 for emergency meals will no longer be in place as of July 1. If you have any questions please contact [Fernanda Crandol](#) or [Ed Zimmer](#).

Governor's Honor Award Announcement

- ◆ The Governor's Honor Awards allow us the opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments and important contributions made by our state workforce. The awards reflect the highest levels of outstanding work at state agencies that significantly contributes to the advancement of the Commonwealth of Virginia's strategic goals, mission objectives, and overall administrative excellence. Honor Award winners are nominated by their management teams and selected by agency heads, secretaries, and the administration as an embodiment of the pulse of our Commonwealth and our local communities.
- ◆ I encourage all VDOF employees to address accomplishments for consideration with their immediate supervisor for referral to our human resources office/executive team.
- ◆ The categories for the 2021 Governor's Honor Awards are:
 - Champion of Change
 - Courageous Leader
 - Innovative Spirit
 - Administration Excellence
 - Personal and Professional Excellence
 - Support Service
 - Diversity, Inclusion and Outreach
 - Creative Customer Service
 - Heroism
 - Public Service
 - Pandemic Response
- ◆ Thank you for the work that you do!

Training Opportunity

2021 Virtual Tree Steward Symposium "Standing Tall, Growing Together."

- ◆ Registration is now open for the 2021 Virtual Tree Steward Symposium "Standing Tall, Growing Together" on June 24-25.
 - Register at <https://treesvirginia.org/events/tree-stewards/131-virtual-tree-steward-symposium>.
 - Registration is free for the two-day event.
 - VDOF staff that work with Tree Stewards are welcome to register and attend.

News You Can Use

Nursery Practices for Loblolly Pine

- ◆ Two new research reports - both pertaining to nursery practices for loblolly pine - have been posted to the resource library. One is a report comparing three-year growth and survival of loblolly pine seedlings lifted with VDOF's two nursery lifting machines that use different root cleaning systems ([RR 138 - https://dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/RR-138.pdf](https://dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/RR-138.pdf)), and the other evaluates the one-year survival effects of VDOF's traditional open-ended bundles to kraft bags for storing and transporting loblolly pine seedlings ([RR 139 - https://dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/RR-139.pdf](https://dof.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/RR-139.pdf)). There was no effect of either the lifter machines or the packaging system on seedling performance.

There is never shortage of lumber, there is just shortage of lumber at cheap prices

- ◆ Lumber prices remain high, but some think high prices can cure high prices. Many are wondering when those prices will start to decrease and what will the new 'normal' price be when they settle? Supply and demand will balance out eventually, and this article provides some predictions and explanations for where lumber is coming from and going to, as well as what we can expect to see in the near future.
 - https://www.lesprom.com/en/news/There_is_never_shortage_of_lumber_there_is_just_shortage_of_lumber_at_cheap_prices_98928/

Public/Employee Event Calendar

- ◆ Did you know our new website has a [public event calendar](#) and the new Intranet has an [employee calendar](#)?
- ◆ Any employee can submit forestry events for our public event calendar or our employee calendar. These submissions are reviewed and approved by Ellen Powell before they appear on the appropriate calendar. For the public calendar, we want to focus on forestry-related events, particularly any events that VDOF is hosting, partnering on, or participating in. For the employee calendar, we want to focus on events involving a larger group of employees, training opportunities, or other events specifically for employees that are helpful for other staff to be aware of. Help us share the word about events by [submitting events](#) for these calendars.

Old Intranet expires August 1.

- ◆ Much of the essential information has been moved over to the new Intranet, such as policy and procedures, forms, templates, logos, etc. What remains on the old Intranet site requires review and likely needs updating before being moved to the new Intranet. All program managers, directors and staff with information on the old Intranet should review the remaining old Intranet material to see if anything is still needed. If the information is no longer valid or useful, no action is required. If the information is still needed, please download the file or copy/paste into a document or other appropriate format, update the information, and submit to [Janet Muncy](#) for inclusion on the new Intranet. **All remaining Intranet information must be pulled to be moved before August 1, 2021,** when we will shut down the old Intranet. <http://intranet.dof.virginia.gov/>

Last Week

State Forester

- ◆ Rob Farrell and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry Heidi Hertz met with Delegate Sally Hudson in Charlottesville to provide an informal introduction to the work of the VDOF and the issues facing the forest resources, forest landowners, and forest industry in Virginia.

- ◆ Rob Farrell and Heidi Hertz also finalized plans for the urban tree retention study with Ann Jennings and Katie Sallee of the Secretary of Natural Resources office. Invitations were then sent to about 40 selected stakeholders.
- ◆ VDOF provided an information session on the federal Forest Legacy conservation grant program for a small group of landowners who are considering working together on what would be a significant land conservation project. Andrew Fotinos (forestland conservation specialist) provided an overview of the program and answered questions. The session was organized by Rex Linville of the Piedmont Environmental Council. Rob Farrell, Terry Lasher (assistant state forester) and Karl Didier (forestland conservation program manager) also participated.
- ◆ In related news, the FY22 Forest Legacy project list was released last week and Virginia's Roanoke River Forest proposal is ranked #14, with a funding allocation of \$2.820 million. If approved by Congress, this funding would support phase 3 of creation of our newest Charlotte State Forest.

Forestland Conservation

- ◆ Lara Johnson (urban & community forestry [U&CF] program manager) and the Blackwater work area (Scott Bachman, senior area forester; Meghan L. Mulroy-Goldman, Kendall Topping, community forestry specialists; and Evan Richardson, forester) met with representatives from the Helping Hands Cemetery to plan a tree inventory and tree risk assessments for some of the trees on the property.

Forest Resource Management

- ◆ Katlin DeWitt (forest health specialist) and Teagan O'Brien (forest health technician) met Rich Reuse (Five Forks work area forester) at Pocahontas State Park to assess a southern pine beetle spot. While southern pine beetle activity has been low in Virginia for the last couple of decades, Chesterfield County consistently has a higher number of southern pine beetles trapped, compared to other trap locations. Management strategies such as thinning were discussed.
- ◆ Lori Chamberlin (forest health program manager) and Katlin DeWitt attended the virtual North American Forest Insect Work Conference. This meeting occurs every five years and brings together forest entomologists throughout the nation to discuss emerging pests, management strategies, and the latest forest entomology research.
- ◆ Teagan O'Brien, Lori Chamberlin, and Katlin DeWitt treated 12 ash trees at Paul D. Camp Community College, with assistance from Blackwater work area staff Meghan Mulroy-Goldman, Kendall Topping (community forestry specialists), and Stephen Jasenak (area forester). These trees are part of a long-term case study that will investigate whether treating a proportion of trees in a stand will protect the entire stand from the emerald ash borer (associated resistance).

Agency Lands

- ◆ A modification of VDOF's Good Neighbor Authority Agreement with the George Washington/Jefferson National Forest has been executed; it will add approximately 1200 acres of possible timber sale projects on the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area within the Cripple Creek & Brush Creek areas, and an area outside of Covington on the James River/Warms Springs Ranger District in the Potts Creek area. Both projects are potentially valued at over \$150,000. Projects are not expected to start until the fall/winter of 2021-22.

State Forest

- ◆ Internal audits were conducted last week in preparation for the upcoming surveillance audits to maintain SFI & ATFS Certification of our State Forests. State Forests being audited are the Whitney,

Conway Robinson, Devils Backbone, Paul, Moore's Creek, and Bourassa. The surveillance audit will occur the week of June 10.

- ◆ Middle Peninsula Master Naturalists completed vernal pool monitoring at Sandy Point State Forest.
- ◆ The U.S. Marine Corps will be conducting a training exercise on the Prince Edward Gallion State Forest in September to early October. The County of Prince Edward is also supporting the training event, which will focus on conducting an exercise from Ft. Pickett called Realistic Urban Training Exercise (RUTX). The exercise trains the Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) and certifies them prior to deployment overseas. The area in Prince Edward, and specifically the State Forest, will be used to conduct a tactical recovery of "downed pilot," using parts of the forest to land an aircraft and recover a downed pilot.

Eastern Region

- ◆ John Rose (forest technician) was out in Isle of Wight County when at a traffic signal he spotted a tractor trailer pulled over in a fueling station with smoke coming from under the trailer. He saw the driver beside the trailer with a fire extinguisher. John pulled over in the fueling station and pulled his hose to assist with combatting the fire. After the blaze was put out, the driver told him he had thought he had a smoking brake on the trailer. It turned out that it was a much different fire. This was a mulch trailer with a self-unloading floor. Mulch fines that had accumulated around the motor that operated the floor had ignited. Fortunately John was in the right place with his tank of water, or the entire trailer may have been destroyed, rather than just the wiring on the unloading power unit.
- ◆ Lisa Deaton (area forester) presented "News from the Woods" for the Gloucester County Master Gardeners. They learned about VDOF's new website and compared notes on southern pine beetle and emerald ash borer activity; spotted lanternfly traps; the use of live oak, cherrybark oak, and longleaf pine as yard and shoreline trees; invasive plants; and Cuban tree frogs. They also began plans for planting redbuds in memory of Page Hutchinson, who was very active in the Gloucester community.
- ◆ The Capital team, with assistance from the U&CF team and Eastern Region staff, took tree data at the Woodland Cemetery in Richmond. Eli Podyma (community forestry specialist) will compile this data and develop a community forestry plan to assist the caretakers with future management.

Western Region

- ◆ Mount Rogers team conducted basic firefighter training (130 field day). Attendees included VDOF employees, USDA Forest Service (USFS), US Fish and Wildlife Service, and local fire response personnel.
- ◆ Chris Sullivan (senior area forester) taught Forest Ecology and Forest Management core classes to the Holston River Chapter of Virginia Master Naturalists. This new crop of volunteers graduated last week.

News Clips

- ◆ [Policymakers are banking on trees to cut carbon. Forest experts say Virginia needs more seedlings.](#)
- ◆ [From Coal Fields to Solar Farms](#)
- ◆ [Roanoke County, Vinton officials to cut the ribbon on Glade Creek Greenway Phase II Tuesday](#)
- ◆ [Forestry Experts Want You to Watch Out for 'Poolside Pests'](#)
- ◆ [Food truck ordinance approved in Amherst County \(Board of Supervisors Meeting minutes\)](#)
- ◆ [Can Tiny Forests Breathe Fresh Air Into Our Cities?](#)
- ◆ [Students, volunteers hitting the streets to gauge range of temps](#)

- ◆ [12 Unbelievable Submerged and Underwater Forests Around the World](#)
- ◆ [VDOF unveils improved website](#)
- ◆ [In Full Bloom: Application deadline approaching for a program to stop emerald ash borers from destroying trees](#)